

Dear Members of the Human Services Committee of Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Yenimar Cortes Morales and I am from Mexico but reside in New Haven, CT. I am also the New Haven Organizer for CT Students for a Dream, a statewide youth led organization that fights for the rights of undocumented youth and their families.

I stand in support of SB284: AN ACT INCREASING THE AGE FROM EIGHT TO EIGHTEEN YEARS FOR AN INCOME-ELIGIBLE PERSON TO OBTAIN MEDICAL ASSISTANCE REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS. Expanding access to HUSKY up to age 18 regardless of immigration status is an important step in making sure our immigrant community has access to the healthcare we all need and deserve. But our work doesn't end with expanding access up to age 18; we need to open access to HUSKY and healthcare to all immigrants of any age, including parents and adults.

I think these testimonies where we express our trauma and beg for people to validate our traumatic experiences are hurtful because It shouldn't take people telling their pain, and trauma to be seen as human and valued. Growing up undocumented without health insurance was hard. My mom had to struggle always finding lower cost clinics or free clinics to take my sisters and I to. It was an experience that was inhuman and traumatizing. Till this day the anxiety of not being able to afford medical help follows my family. There is an unsaid rule in our undocumented community that is "treat pain, wounds, etc..at home till you get better or till you have no choice but to go to the emergency room". This rule is terrifying to live by, especially when you have to beg your loved ones and tell them it's time to seek URGENT medical attention. We deserve better, and it's so disgusting how this country only values the rich and white people.

Last year the state of Connecticut expanded access to HUSKY to children ages 0-8 years which was a good start! This year Connecticut has the opportunity to change the lives of so many children for the better by expanding access to Husky up to children and young people up to age of 18 regardless of immigration status. I really hope y'all vote yes on this because like i said before growing up undocumented without health insurance is traumatizing. This will give the opportunity for children and young people to feel safer and cared for. The work doesn't end this year though! In the long term, the state of Connecticut needs to ensure that all immigrants, including parents and adults, are able to have access to HUSKY and the healthcare they need. It is the CT Legislature's responsibility to do this especially during a world pandemic. Thank you for your time!

I support S.B. 284 and I ask the committee to support and pass this legislation. Looking forward, I ask the committee to work towards opening access to all immigrants regardless of age.

Thank you for your time,  
*Yenimar Cortes Morales*